

Portland Observer's 50 Years

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But it wasn't easy taking over the paper, he said, and for years, Joyce published from her home's basement on a shoestring, but everyone helped out and the paper was — and is — a family affair.

"Our family has been involved starting when I was 8 or 9 years old and I used to go the stores with my uncle to sell the paper," Washington said.

More than anything, Joyce Washington wanted to help her community, Washington said, and that tradition carries on to this day, as the paper strives to represent the African American community and other communities of color in Portland.

"She wanted to promote families, to promote the African American family," he said. "She would rather see an uplifting story on a local family than a politician. She was big on grassroots and I think we continue that legacy today. We have been able to make it a success but keep the value as an asset for the community, to keep it alive. She died fairly young, but then my brother Chuck took it over."

Charles "Chuck" Washington joined the paper in 1990 as public relations director and assistant editor and took over as publisher when his mother passed away in 1996. He developed a new marketing strategy, restructured operations and was instrumental in propelling the paper into the mainstream publications and influential community voice that is it today.

Speaking about his father's legacy when he died in 2012, Ra-keem Washington said the newspaper's role in highlighting issues and "spreading a sense of inclusiveness and diversity that he so longed for in his everyday life, just meant the world to him."

Ethan Johnson, chair of Black Studies at Portland State University, said the Portland Observer's

role in Portland's African American community has been extremely important over the years and relevant for serving people who need a voice.

"It's important to have a paper that focuses on Black people locally and in the state and nation," Johnson said.

He said the Portland Observer serves an important purpose, where people can go for information, news and other issues, but "It's also a pleasure to read."

"I enjoy reading the paper and can always find stuff about entertainment, sports and life that's related to Black people. I think that's so important," he said.

"I can open the Willamette Week or the Oregonian, but to me, I've always felt like they are racist papers," he added. "They don't say it, but they don't focus on Black lives and don't report in real ways about Black people. It's also an opportunity for Black writers to be able to speak to the communities they belong to."

Mark Washington, carrying on the traditions started by his mother and brother, said the Portland Observer will carry on, although the future will be challenging.

"Even though we are in struggling times, the Portland Observer is celebrating the fact that we have unfailingly served the African American community in Portland in good faith and service," he said.

Washington gives thanks to his late brother Chuck and sister-in-law Elizabeth for all the work they did in keeping the Portland Observer a success over the years and also for the entire Portland Observer staff.

"To my employees, without them I would not have been able to continue the legacy of my Mother. Thank you Michael Leighton, Paul Neufeldt, Lucinda Baldwin, Leonard Latin, Marco Washington, J. Markiw, Beverly Corbell, Shawn-tell Washington, Quayuana Washington and Felicia Slider."

Observer: Did you Know?

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Cory Publishing, commemorated her son, Cory Washington's contributions to the paper. Cory was one of the first, and most involved staff members of the paper. He was shot to death following a basketball-game dispute in Peninsula Park in 1991, at 27 years old.

- In an interview with The Oregonian in December 1995, Joyce Washington said, "We try very hard to include everybody in our paper. This is a diverse community, it's not comprised of just black people. White people make the news also, so they go on our front page too."
- Another of Joyce Washington's

sons, the late Charles H. Washington, was the Portland Observer's previous editor-in-chief and publisher.

"My mother was very proud of having never missed a (publication) date; we never failed to publish an edition," Washington told The Oregonian in March 1996, when his mother died.

- Upon her death, Washington's son Charles "Chuck" Washington, a Portland native and a graduate of Jefferson High School, took over as publisher until his death in December 2012
- The paper was then passed on to Mark Washington who controls the paper today.

Ebituary

In Loving Memory

Bernice Gibson Branch

The Branch family would like to thank all of you who have expressed your love, prayers and condolences towards the passing of our beloved Bernice Gibson Branch. As much as we would love to provide friends, extended family and loved ones with the opportunity to attend a final going home celebration, unfortunately the current Covid 19 restrictions make it impossible to safely do so.

Out of respect for her faith and



final wishes, the Branch family has decided to conduct a time sensitive viewing for our immediate family which will be held at Terry Family Funeral Home on Friday, Nov. 20, between 4 and 6 p.m. Please visit the funeral home website to RSVP to schedule your viewing.

In order to allow all other friends, extended family and love ones the

opportunity to participate in a more traditional farewell observance, we have decided to conduct a later memorial celebration during the month of April 2020. It is our hope that the Covid 19 restrictions will have been lifted by then thereby allowing for a larger gathering where you will have the opportunity to view a chronicled presentation of her life as well as express your own personal sentiments.

The exact date, time and location will be announced through public media outlets, including the local newspapers, local radio stations and other public media outlets. We thank you in advance for your understanding and cooperation and look forward to your attendance in April.

DID YOU KNOW

RAYMOND HARRIS?

DID YOU WORK AT

PORTLAND, OR
AREA SHIPYARDS

IN THE 1960s?

OR

LEBARRE MACHINE WORKS
AS A HEAT TREATER

IN THE 1970s-1985?

The law firm of Schroeter Goldmark & Bender is seeking information on behalf of the family of **Raymond Harris**.

Please call us toll-free at:

1-800-809-2234

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